

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS!**REACHING OUT, TOUCHING LIVES!****About this section**

This report celebrates the Greensboro Parks & Recreation Department's achievements in its first 75 years.

To find out more about parks facilities and activities, visit www.greensboro-nc.gov/leisure.

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Clockwise from top left: 1955 Show Wagon performance; Country Park, which opened in 1934; an early recreation program; a Sixty-Plus Club ladies'

fishing program; and campers and a counselor at a MainStream Resources activity.

Photos courtesy of Greensboro Parks & Recreation Department

Residents make memories at city parks

"I like the fact that Greensboro has parks. I have eight grandsons, one granddaughter and a great grandchild," says James Ebert, 68, of Greensboro, while feeding the ducks at the Bog Garden on Hobbs Road along with his grandson, Nick Ebert, 9, also of Greensboro. "We've been coming here to feed the ducks for quite awhile. ... It's a good place to take the grandchildren."

Nick Ebert, son of Mark and Mary Beth Ebert, says he likes feeding the ducks, too. "They're funny and they're noisy." Nick added that he likes parks because "I also like to climb trees."

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Lee Basey of Summerfield and his family also enjoy the Bog Garden. "My son plays soccer and Greensboro Parks & Recreation is a big part of that," Basey says. His

son, Jeff, 18, has been playing soccer on Greensboro soccer fields since he was 7 years old.

"Last year, this is where we came to take all of our family pictures," says Basey, standing on the portion of the boardwalk that overlooks an adjoining lake. "This is an incredible setting and it's so peaceful."

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Clare Parrish, 11, of Greensboro and her mother, Karen Garraputa, appreciate the natural setting of the Bog Garden.

Clare says Greensboro's parks are special. "The parks are a place to go so you can relax, and they're very beautiful. They're also good places to go to relieve stress. It's fun walking through the parks."

Noted Garraputa: "It's important to have green spaces

in the city. Great cities have public spaces and public art. I think it's important to have that green refuge in an urban environment. It's also a good learning experience for the children."

And, Garraputa says, her family has fond memories associated with their visits to Greensboro's public parks, "like the Bog Garden parties and the time when our first dog jumped off the bridge to chase the catfish."

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Greensboro senior Arlene Newnam is a frequent participant at Smith Senior Center, where Newnam says, "There is never a dull moment."

Newnam says the programs for seniors, including the fitness room, exercise classes and the gymnasium, which is available for walking, are important to her and they're beneficial to all seniors.

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Rose Marie Ponton is chairwoman of the Greensboro Parks & Recreation Commission, which advises the staff and promotes the department's programs. Ponton was first appointed to the commission in 1980.

"It has been a very rewarding experience to have a very small part in the developing of an award-winning parks and recreation system. Being a part of Greensboro's 20-year master plan process, plus the master plan for Guilford County, was exciting.

"Then to see so much of it come to life has been like a dream come true. The best part has been to see our citizens enjoying the many benefits that our park system provides."

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